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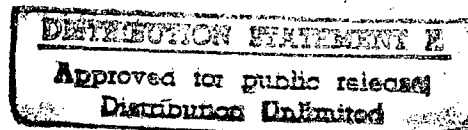
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TRANSLATIONS FROM HSIEN-TAI FO-HSUEH (MODERN BUDDHISM)

OCTOBER 1959

- Communist China -

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TRANSLATIONS FROM HSIEN-TAI FO-HSUEH (MODERN BUDDHISM)

OCTOBER 1959

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Hsien-tai Fo-hsueh (Modern Buddhism), No 10, Peiping,  
30 October 1959./

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LAMAS OF INNER MONGOLIA STEP ON  
THE PATH OF BLISS

[This is a translation of an article written by Kolatsang, appearing in Hsien-tai Fo-hsueh (Modern Buddhism), No 10, Peiping, 30 October 1959, pages 16-17.]

Before the liberation, lamas of Inner Mongolia and the people of the Mongolian nationality suffered the same bitterness and hardship. With the exception of a few rich, powerful and upper-class lamas who served the interests of the reactionary ruling class and enjoyed special privilege, the great majority of the lamas and the broad masses of people suffered the same oppression and insult by reactionaries both within and without.

The Kuomintang reactionaries and the Japanese aggressors, in addition to threatening and luring a minority of upper-class lamas to serving their interests, a great number of young and adult lamas to enlist in their armies, fight in the fore-front or serve as coolies. Furthermore they stationed their troops in the Buddhist temples, defiled Buddhist chambers, and destroyed Buddhist sutras and images, they even demolished Buddhist halls, robbed treasures of the temples, murdered lamas, burned their properties and committed all sorts of crimes. In such a dark society, since there was no protection for the lives of the lamas themselves, it would be useless to talk about the question of protection of temples and freedom of religious belief.

After the liberation, however, under the brilliant leadership of the Communist Party and Chairman Mao, the leadership personnel of the Party and government at various levels in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region have thoroughly implemented the policy of freedom of religious belief and accorded proper respect to the religious belief and customs of the masses as well as protection to the monasteries and temples. For this reason, not only the monasteries, temples, sacred mountains, Au-paos, Buddhist

images, sutras, relics and the like have been well protected throughout Inner Mongolia, but the Government has also helped the lamas to repair and renovate the Hsi-li-t'u Monastery and the Wu-su-t'u Monastery in the municipality of Hu-hohao-t'e, and the Wu-tan Monastery in the municipality of Pao-t'ou and the Kan-chu-erh Temple in the Hu-ts'ang-pei-erh League and other well-known monasteries and temples. The lamas themselves have also repaired a great many monasteries and temples.

Lamas in Inner Mongolia have also led a good and regular religious life and held religious festivals and temple fairs according to schedule. For instance, at the seven-day Sang-chi-teh-mao-la-mu festival, which is held at the Kan-chu-erh Temple in the Hu-ts'ang-pei-erh League every year beginning on the 22nd day of the third month (the lunar calendar), a great many lamas have chanted scriptures and great masses worshipped. On the seventh day of the eighth month of each year (lunar calendar) the same temple holds the Lu-pao Festival at which scriptures are chanted and sacrifice made to Lu-pao. It also holds the "Na-ta-mu" Festival. 1959's Lu-pao Festival was more solemn and interesting than ever.

Starting from the 15th day of the sixth month of each year, all the monasteries and temples solemnly hold their regular "Ya-jih-ai" (a 45-day scripture-chanting festival). The masses also have complete freedom to invite lamas to chant scriptures for them, or worship Buddha and make offerings themselves. Each time when there is a temple fair or religious festival, the government would always show its concern by supplying wheat flour, oil, meat and other foodstuff which the temple and the people need for such an occasion.

The political status of the lamas has also been raised. The government has shown proper concern to, and made arrangement for, the representatives of the lamas. There are over 320 lama representatives in the various people's congresses, people's political consultative conferences and people's organizations of the banner and hsien level and above in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. There are also lama representatives in the National People's Congress and People's Political Consultative Conference. Some lamas have been elected directors of the agricultural animal husbandry cooperatives, production team leaders of people's communes, manager of public-private jointly operated grazing farms, and directors of the Mongolian type clinics. There are also many lamas who have been adjudged labor models.

Upon the request of the lamas, the government has helped them to establish the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region Branch of the Chinese Buddhist Association. From the leading living buddhas and great lamas of the various monasteries and temples, four chairmen and vice chairmen, four general secretaries and associate secretaries and 73 directors and executive directors were elected thereby undertaking activities among the religious masses. As far as the lamas are concerned, this is something unprecedented in history which makes them feel a joy that is unique in itself.

The Party and the Government have shown an unusual concern about the education and life of the lamas. Upon the request of the lamas themselves and through political study sessions, discussions, report meetings and other methods, the government made arrangements for the lamas to receive an education in the religious and nationalities policies, in patriotism and the other policies, laws and decrees, thus gradually raising the political consciousness and understanding of the lamas. Lamas of all the monasteries and temples have signed a patriotic pact positively and participated in the various political movements, such as patriotic sanitation, increasing production, economizing consumption, resist-America aid-Korea, anti-nuclear weapons, signature campaign for safeguarding world peace, agricultural and animal husbandry socialist transformation, the people's commune and other movements.

During the nationwide rectification movement, the lamas, like the other people of the nation, received a profound and systematic socialist education and clearly realized the direction of the socialist road. As a result, they positively took part in the agricultural and animal husbandry cooperation and the people's commune movements, and voluntarily incorporated their temple granaries and privately owned animals into animal husbandry cooperatives and public-private jointly operated grazing farms and willingly gave up the temple-owned land without even receiving any compensation for it.

During the people's commune movement, the government gave a full consideration to the concrete conditions of the various monasteries and temples and left a sufficient number of animals and food for the living and activity needs of the monasteries and temples and the lamas. When the government fixed the value of the animals, it also showed a special concern about the monasteries and temples which fully satisfied the lamas

and the religious masses.

In the great leap forward movement, lamas of Inner Mongolia positively supported the socialist construction of the nation and the Autonomous Region. Some of the monasteries and temples took part in steel refining while others made positive investments and established factories. The young and adult lamas voluntarily took part in industrial, agricultural, and animal husbandry production. The various government organizations gave special protection and help to the lamas who took part in productive labor and assigned them work according to their special ability. These organizations also showed a special concern about the daily religious life of the lamas.

Because the lamas have joined in productive labor, their income has been increased and their living standard also raised. Many of them are able to support their own apprentices and relatives while many others have opened savings accounts. The lamas who are old, weak, and have no relatives and means of living have been especially taken care of. If these lamas live in the cities, the temple granaries will take care of them. For instance, the Hsi-li-t'u Monastery in Hu-ho-hao-t'e distributes 20 yuan every month to each of such lamas. If they live in the rural areas, the people's communes and the monasteries and temples will take care of them as a common effort. Other such lamas have been taken care of directly by the government. All this arrangement has made it possible for the old lamas to enjoy a secure retired life. For this reason, they have expressed their heart-felt gratitude to the Party and the government, saying everywhere that they "have no worries about what to eat and what to wear, for life today is much better than in the past."

The government has also considered highly the traditional medical practice of the lamas and helped them to improve their technique and get organized so as to positively serve the people's health and sanitation enterprise. At the present time, there are more than 3,000 lamas who are engaged in medical practice.

Meanwhile, through the cultural studies in the past few years, the lamas' cultural standard has been greatly raised. In the whole Autonomous Region, 90 percent of the lamas under 50 years of age have become literate.

From this series of events we have deeply realized that lamas in Inner Mongolia have truly obtained freedom of religious belief since the liberation. The Party and the Government have accorded an unusual respect

to the religious belief of the lamas and the religious masses. This is something which the old society could never imagine.

At the present time while we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the founding of our fatherland, I see the flying development of our nation's socialist construction; the accomplishments in the various construction fields of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region; the prosperity and health of the people of the Mongolian nationality since they were liberated from oppression, exploitation and poverty; and I see the great change in the lives, thinking and spiritual outlook of the lamas which has been made possible through the development of social, political, economic and cultural events. All of this makes me feel happy and encouraged. When I recall the past and look at the present, I feel even more deeply the brilliant leadership of Chairman MAO and the greatness of the Party's nationalities and religious policies.

In practical life and education, I have further realized that only when the fatherland and our nationality have gone through a prosperous development will there be any well-being and future for religion, and that only under the leadership of the Communist Party and the People's government can there be genuine freedom of religious belief. We lamas of Inner Mongolia are heartily grateful to the Party and government for their protection and care and we sincerely support the Party's general line for socialist construction. Such a general line is a glorious banner which leads us from victory to victory and from earth to paradise. Let us cry:

Long live the Chinese Communist Party!

Long live Chairman MAO, the leader of the Chinese people!

Long live the People's Republic of China!

THE CORRECT CARRYING OUT OF THE PARTY'S POLICY OF  
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE FRONTIER REGION OF YUNNAN

/This is a translation of an article written by  
Sung-liu A-chi-mo-ni, appearing in Hsien-tai Fo-hsueh  
(Modern Buddhism), No 10, Peiping, 30 October 1959,  
pages 18-19.<sup>7</sup>

In the 10 years since the liberation, under the correct leadership of the great Chinese Communist Party and Chairman MAO, the people of the various nationalities in the frontier region of Yunnan have been living happily in the big family of all the nationalities of the fatherland. The glorious light of the Party's religious policy has been shining upon us and we Buddhists of the various nationalities in the frontier region have all obtained complete freedom of religious belief.

In 1953, I went to Peiping to attend the meeting in which the Chinese Buddhist Association was established. At the meeting I and the other Buddhist representatives of the various brother nationalities met together and discussed problems. At that time, I began to understand the great significance of the policy of freedom of religious belief. Since the liberation, the Party has correctly carried out the policy of freedom of religious belief. It was carried out after the liberation and it is still being carried out at the present time. The peoples of the various nationalities in the frontier region are heartily grateful to the Party, united around it, follow its leadership and construct socialism with one heart and mind.

In 1953, the Chinese Buddhist Association was established and I was elected vice chairman. In 1957, when the second national conference of Buddhist representatives was held in Peiping, many Buddhist representatives of the six nationalities in the frontier region of Yunnan attended the conference. At that conference, I and Wu-ku-la were elected vice chairmen and more than 20 others were elected directors. Thus we gloriously joined the national Buddhist organization.

Around 1957, branches of the Chinese Buddhist Association were established in the Teh-hung Autonomous Chou, the Lin-ts'ang Special area and the Hsi-shuang-pan-na Autonomous Chou all of which are in the frontier region of Yunnan. Through these establishments, the

Buddhists in the frontier region have been organized to undertake work under the Party's leadership. All of this would have been impossible if the Party had not correctly implemented its policy of freedom of religious belief.

Particularly in 1956, with the support and help of the Party, the Chinese Buddhist Association appointed a delegation to escort the Buddha tooth relic to our region for the Buddhists of the various nationalities to worship. As many as 200,000 people saw and worshipped the relic which satisfied the desire of the Buddhists of the various nationalities who had for centuries longed to worship it. All of them gratefully said: "Only in new China which is under the leadership of the Communist Party and Chairman MAO are we able to enjoy genuine freedom of religious belief and worship the Buddha tooth relic in our own region. In the past, the imperialists and the Kuomintang reactionaries spread rumors, saying, 'the Communists will destroy religion,' but the events which we have experienced ourselves have smashed such shameful rumors. We Buddhists of the frontier region have taken a vow to strengthen our unity, fortify our frontier region and repay the great love and kindness of the Communist Party and Chairman MAO. May Chairman MAO live forever to be the leader of us frontier peoples!"

In 1956, through the kindness of the Party, the inspection group of the Buddhists of the T'ai nationality of Yunnan was organized. We of the group visited Peiping, the northeast, East China and other places and saw with our own eyes the rapid development of our nation's socialist construction, the air planes, automobiles, trains and other machines which were made by our country. We also visited mines with unlimited and rich mineral deposits. Through that inspection tour, we realized the great strength of our fatherland, which is under the leadership of the Party and Chairman MAO, and the matchless superiority of socialism. We are grateful to the Party for its concern and care in opening up our eyes and raising our patriotic consciousness.

Under the rule of the reactionary government before the liberation, We Buddhists of the frontier regions were despised politically. After the liberation, however, under the leadership of the Communist Party, we gained political equality. I and living Buddha Mu-sung who is of the Tibetan nationality, have been appointed members of the National People's Political Consultative Conference while Living Buddha Keng-chueh has been

elected a deputy to the National People's Congress. There are many other Buddhists of the frontier regions who have been members of the people's congresses and the people's political consultative conferences of the provincial, autonomous chou and hsien levels. We could never have obtained such a glorious political status under the rule of the reactionary government before the liberation. It is only under the leadership of the Communist Party and under the shining light of the policy of freedom of religious belief that we Buddhists of the frontier regions are able to achieve such a glory.

In 1956, with the permission of the Chinese Buddhist Association, six elders of the Hsi-shuang-pan-na area received promotion in rank. I and Sung-liu Meng-hun were promoted Sung-liu A-chi-mu-ni; Ku-pa Meng-hai was promoted Sha-mi; Sang-ch'ia-la-cha-man was promoted Sung-liu; Sha-mi Meng han was promoted Sang-ch'ia-la-cha; and Tu-lung-meng-peng was promoted Ku-pa-t'ing. Four other elders in Keng-ma Hsien were also promoted. This series of promotions has been a subject of joy and praise for the Buddhist masses of the T'ai nationality. This event has made us feel the unique warmth of our big family of nationalities.

The year 1958 was one in which our nation made a great leap forward which never before took place in history. Under the shining light of the general line for socialist construction and with the encouragement of the great leap forward, we Buddhists of the frontier regions have studied the Party's policies, raised our patriotic awareness and realized the glory of labor. We have also positively taken part in productive labor, helped the farmers with their production, and expressed the positive spirit of labor. Some of us have been adjudged labor models, others awarded red banners and still others received public citations.

In socialist construction, we Buddhists have voluntarily contributed our strength. Meanwhile, we have also helped the government to prevent the enemies from undertaking undermining activities. We have, likewise, eliminated the counter-revolutionaries who wear religious cloaks and have purified the rank of the religious circles.

In the 10 years since the founding of our state, under the leadership of the great Chinese Communist Party and with the correct and brilliant guidance of Chairman MAO, the great leader whom the peoples of all the nationalities respect and love, and under the shining

light of the great general line for socialist construction, our fatherland has made great achievements in socialist construction and the living conditions of the people throughout the nation have been notably improved. We Buddhists of the various nationalities in the frontier regions are determined to unite with the people of the nation, obey the Party and Chairman MAO and positively participate in our nation's socialist construction. We rejoice and congratulate each other at the 10th anniversary of the founding of our great fatherland!

## THE PRIDE OF NEW CHINA'S BUDDHISTS

[This is a translation of an article written by Shih Rev. Sheng-ch'uan, appearing in Hsien-tai Fo-hsueh (Modern Buddhism), No 10, Peiping, 30 October 1959, pages 21-23.]

Living in the present age, the age of MAO Tse-tung, the great leader of the Chinese people, it is natural that everybody feels a sense of pride. We Buddhist followers are not exceptional.

In the 10 years of socialist revolution and construction, we have achieved a great victory on the political, economic, cultural and all other fronts. It has changed our nation's geographical face, our people's outlook, our social system and our way of thinking. Under the banner of MAO Tse-tung, everything is under constant change and becoming new. The bad is becoming good, the sinful is becoming virtuous and the ugly is becoming beautiful. Particularly in 1958, under the shining light of the Party's general line and under the call that steel must be the source power to bring about a general leap forward, the people throughout the nation, with the imposing force like the galloping of ten thousand horses, made "high mountains to bow and big rivers give way" and everytaul-ly won a rich and double victory on the production and ideological fronts. This made it possible for the socialist construction of the fatherland to make big advances and great leap forward.

In such a big melting furnace, we Buddhist followers have also been refined like the other people and our understanding has been raised and our action invigorated. In matters of religious belief, we have changed our heretical belief into orthodox ones and our selfish and negative actions into unselfish and positive ones. We have also liberated ourselves from our inferiority complex and replaced it with self-confidence, and have genuinely experienced the modern spirit that "man must purify himself through suffering and China must regenerate itself through hardship."

First of all, the Party's religious policy has liberated the Buddhist followers from their sense of inferiority. In the old society, there was a great discrimination against Buddhists and they were even deprived of their basic rights as citizens. Since the liberation, however, there has been a mutual respect

between man and man and the freedom of religious belief has been guaranteed in the Constitution. The only people who are not respected are the counter-revolutionaries and bad elements.

Under the rule of the reactionary government in the past, the bandit-like troops were regularly stationed in Peiping's two big Han Buddhist monasteries, the Kuang-chi Monastery and the Fa-yuan Monastery as well as in the Tibetan and Mongolian Yung-ho Lamasery. These troops damaged these monasteries and hindered the religious life of the Buddhist followers. After the liberation, the government allotted large sums of money to repair and renovate these monasteries giving them a glittering, glorious and solemn new look. The Chinese Buddhist Association is now housed in the Kuang-chi Monastery, the Institute of Chinese Buddhist Studies in the Fa-yuan Monastery and the Yung-ho Lamasery has become a center of study for Tibetan and Mongolian lamas. Aside from this, many other monasteries and temples which have a bearing on our cultural history or are famous places of scenic beauty have also been repaired and renovated.

Since there are many Buddhist followers among the Chinese people and since the Party respects the people and serves them, it has respected the religion in which the people believe as well as respected the monks and nuns who take religion as their profession. The Party and the Government have always thoroughly implemented the policy of freedom of religious belief. It has accorded special care to the characteristics of the life of monks and nuns and supported the religious activities of the lay Buddhists.

The Party and Government not only have cared for us in our regular religious life, such as morning and evening scripture lessons, seasonal festivals, prayer for the dead, scripture expounding, preaching and so on, but have also given us greater support whenever there is an important occasion or an international religious activity.

For instance, the Buddha Tooth Pagoda in the Lingkuang Monastery was destroyed by the allied army in 1900 during the Boxer Uprising and the Buddha tooth was moved and housed in the Kuang-chi Monastery after the liberation. The Buddha tooth relic was also escorted to Burma for worship by the Burmese Buddhists. To meet the aspiration of us Buddhists, the Government has allotted a big sum of money to build a new pagoda to house the Buddha tooth relic. This is the greatest event in the eyes of us Buddhists both in Peiping and throughout the nation.

It is with such a generosity that the Government has supported our Buddhist enterprise. The great, beautiful and new pagoda will soon be completed. But our enemies abroad are still slandering that our Party and Government are persecuting the Buddhist religion. In reality, those who truly persecuted our Buddhist religion were the reactionary rulers of the past and the imperialistic bandits.

"The citizens of the People's Republic of China shall have freedom of religious belief." This is written into the sacred Constitution of our nation. But we religious followers must not read this sentence in isolation. According to the personal experience of us Buddhists in Peiping, the Party has fully implemented its religious policy. But the religious followers (including some Buddhists) who have not done a good job in studying the Constitution and the series of policies, laws and decrees are apt to assert the freedom of religious belief and forget the basic spirit of the Constitution. For this reason, the Buddhists in Peiping organized a study committee to study regularly the government's policies, laws and decrees and take part in the series of political movements.

Many of us Buddhists in Peiping voluntarily took up productive labor, especially in 1958's great leap forward, all-people steel refining and people's commune movements. It is indeed not a simple matter to raise the Buddhists' enthusiasm for labor. We all know that "Labor is a glory for all the citizens of the People's Republic of China who have the capacity for labor," but if we have not received a profound patriotic and socialist education and if our tendency toward exploitation has not been shaken from the root, it will not be easy to establish the standpoint of the workers.

All of the Buddhists in Peiping have organized themselves and have undertaken regular study with the support of the Party and the Government. Through a long period of study, they have understood that religious belief is a matter having to do with personal thinking and consciousness whereas loving our country, taking the socialist road and accepting the Party's leadership is a great and common concern of the 650 million people and a political issue. Through study, we have heightened our power for understanding problems. Under the shining light of the Party's general line and with the encouragement of the nation's all-people leap forward, every one, excepting those with the most stubborn disposition, will be roused into developing his enthusiasm for labor.

The Buddhists in Peiping have made a good record in the various units of productive labor. Some of them have won red banners while others have been adjudged labor models. We Buddhists who in the old society were ridiculed as "parasites" have received the glorious title of working citizens in the new society. We labor not only for our own livelihood but also for the great cause of our nation's socialist construction.

The pride of new China's Buddhists is a product of their practical labor. Our fatherland is becoming increasingly prosperous and powerful, its land increasingly beautiful and sacred, its people's life increasingly richer, and its social evils increasingly reduced or completely eliminated. Human forces for world peace are growing increasingly greater and will eventually eliminate all war and secure everlasting peace. We Buddhists feel that in all of these achievements we are contributing a share of our strength. Our share of strength in socialist construction is truly like a drop of water falling into a great ocean which will never dry up. It is through the political education of the Party and Chairman MAO that we Buddhist followers have been able to fulfill to "love our country and benefit our people" and express the merciful spirit of Buddha himself.

In the 10 years, under the Party's long-range education, we Buddhist followers have been able to combine study, labor and spiritual cultivation, and even further realize the greatness of the Party's religious policy and enjoy a full and happy religious life. This is something which our enemies abroad cannot and would not understand. What they do is merely to close their eyes and slander our great religious policy.

We are not afraid of the slanders of the enemies. We are proud of living happily in our great fatherland. We are freely engaged in glorious labor and are freely believing in the doctrines of our Buddha.

At the great celebration of the 10th anniversary of the founding of our nation, Chairman MAO at the T'ien-an Square inspected our heroic national army which is a great power in constructing our socialist fatherland. Among the soldiers of that heroic army were some Buddhist followers. How can we Buddhists help feeling a sense of pride!

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